

## DPD Contacts

To make comments:

Send a letter to DPD, Public Resource Center (PRC), Suite 2000, P.O. Box 34019, Seattle, WA 98124-4019, or email the PRC at [prc@seattle.gov](mailto:prc@seattle.gov). Comments must be in written form.

### To receive public notice of MUP applications, decisions, and meetings:

Visit our Land Use Information Bulletin (LUIB) web-site: [www.seattle.gov/dpd/notices](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/notices). The LUIB is published Monday and Thursday. You can sign up to receive a twice-weekly email alert when the LUIB is posted. You can also sign up for an RSS feed.

### For answers to land use questions:

- For general zoning questions please call DPD's Public Resource Center at (206) 684-8467 and leave a detailed message or send an email to [prc@seattle.gov](mailto:prc@seattle.gov).
- For site-specific Single Family zoning information, please call DPD's Applicant Services Center at (206) 684-8850.
- Due to the complexity of Seattle's Land Use Code, all other types of zoning information must be obtained in person at our Applicant Services Center (ASC). The ASC is located on the 20th floor of the Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 5th Avenue. You may also submit questions through our online Land Use Q&A Service at [www.seattle.gov/dpd/landuse](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/landuse).

### For property information, maps, and historical records:

Use our online services at [www.seattle.gov/dpd/online-services](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/online-services) or visit the PRC located on the 20th floor of the Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 5th Avenue.

### To track a permit:

Use our online services at [www.seattle.gov/dpd/online-services](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/online-services) to track the status of a permit.



# neighbors who NOTICE

DPD's Guide to  
Neighborhood Notices and Commenting

## What Do Seattle's Land Use Notice Signs Mean To Me?

When you see a DPD sign on a property, consider it an invitation to be involved in the development of the community! You are invited to comment on the development proposals described on our public notices.

- Large white signs are posted when a project's size triggers a review of potential environmental impacts (known as SEPA review).
- A yellow 18- by 24-inch sign is posted for other Land Use proposals, including public meetings, variances, conditional uses, most shoreline projects, and small subdivision projects.
- Adjacent property owners and tenants may also receive notice of specific applications by mail.

Please note many projects do not require public notice. Those projects will not have signs posted and they do not have a comment period or appeal opportunity.



### Who Can Comment?

Anyone! Residents, students, employees and business owners—anyone who feels they would be affected by the proposal.

### Why Solicit Public Comments?

The City recognizes that people have unique knowledge about the areas in which they live and work. The purpose in collecting comments is to help DPD identify potential problems and find solutions within the legal limits established by the code.

### When Can Comments Be Made?

Land Use signs and other notices clearly state the beginning and end dates of an official comment period. Typically DPD takes longer than the published comment period to make a final decision. DPD will consider any comment provided before a decision is made, regardless of whether it comes within the official comment period. However, submitting your comments early is the only way to ensure that we will have time to consider them before making a decision.

### What Comments Are Considered?

DPD can only consider comments that meet the requirements identified in the Land Use code. Comments regarding a project’s impact on property values or private views can not be addressed. Below are examples of the types of concerns that can be considered for different projects. In some cases a project may include more than one of these components.

**SEPA (State Environmental Policy Act):** These policies protect our natural environment, including:

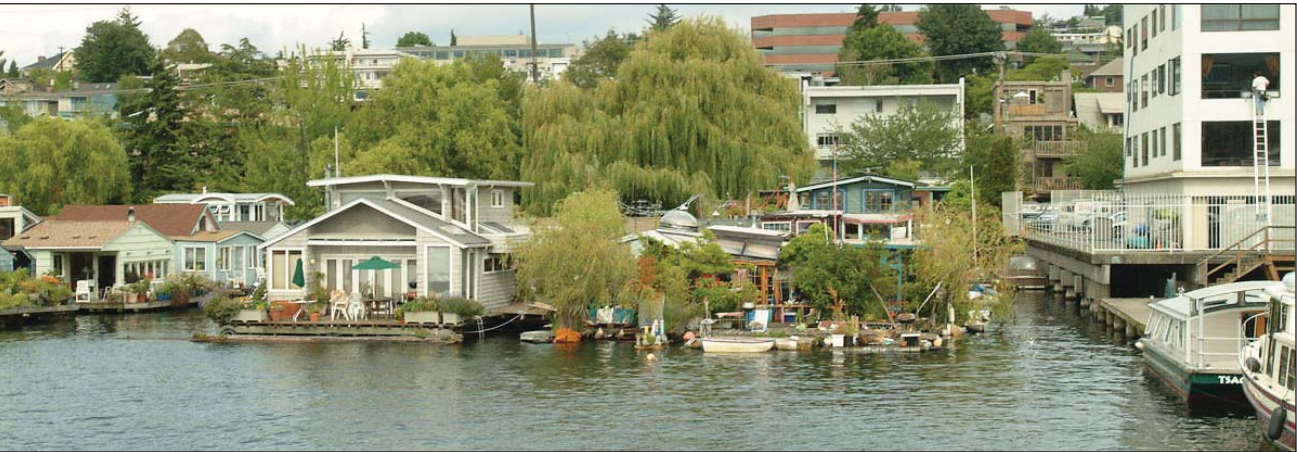
earth, water, air, rare plants, and endangered animals. The policies also address the built environment such as traffic, light and glare. The SEPA ordinance has 19 such policies. You can get a copy at DPD or online at [www.seattle.gov/dpd/codes](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/codes) (linked under Land use-related codes).

**Shoreline:** Shorelines around major water bodies require additional scrutiny to protect water quality, habitat, water-dependent uses, and public views; and to improve public access to the water.

**Variance:** Variances are required when a unique situation prevents development that conforms to the code. The five criteria for evaluating a variance request are 1) the unusual property conditions that may prevent the owner from fully developing the property; 2) whether the variance goes too far; 3) granting the variance will not cause physical harm or negatively affect the character of the area; 4) not granting the variance would create a hardship or physical difficulties; and 5) granting the variance is consistent with the spirit and purpose of the Land Use Code.

**Administrative Conditional Uses:** Uses that are allowed in certain zones if they meet specific criteria. These criteria focus on impacts such as noise, odors, litter, glare from lighting, parking, or traffic. The criteria may also address uses, such as limiting residential uses in heavy commercial or industrial areas to prevent conflicts.

**Design Review:** Design Review addresses the physical appearance of the building and how it relates to its surroundings, including the overall size and shape of the building, landscaping, and materials. Environmental concerns, such as traffic and parking impacts, are not addressed by design review. Design Review is not required for all projects and is specified by the land use code.



### How Can I Make Effective Comments?

- Briefly explain who you are and why you are interested in the project.
- Review the project file and plans.
- State your concerns on relevant issues clearly and succinctly.
- State opinions and preferences, and propose alternative solutions to particular issues.
- Ask for studies that you think are important but have not been provided.
- Provide your own information.
- Identify project features that you like and think should not be changed.
- Comment about the project’s compliance with the Land Use Code.
- Provide your USPS mailing address so we can notify you of decisions and/or public meetings

### What Prompts a Public Meeting?

Some projects require a public meeting as part of the review process. For others a public meeting may be held when DPD receives a request from at least 50 people. Notice of public meetings will be published in the Land Use Information Bulletin, a sign posted on the property and notice mailed to those who commented on the project.

### Can I Make a Difference?

Yes you can. Developers have said the neighbors’ comments received through the design review process helped them improve their projects. Public comments have prompted developers to modify their project or submit a completely new plan that responded to community concerns.

DPD planners carefully review public comments before issuing their decisions.



### What Are Appeals?

Most projects that require signs to be posted will include an opportunity to appeal DPD’s decision. An appeal is an opportunity to contest a decision by DPD without having to go to court. Information on how to file an appeal is included in the notice of decision. (Most appeals are heard by the City Hearing Examiner. Detailed information on how to file an appeal with the Shoreline Hearings Board is available in Client Assistance Memo 232, *How to Appeal the Granting, Conditioning or Denial of Shoreline Permits.*)

### Beyond Appeals

If either side to an appeal disagrees with the outcome, the appeal decision may be challenged in court.

